IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 31.

Please cancel claims 32-39, and please add claims 40-51.

31. (Thrice Amended) A gate electrode comprising:

an insulative layer disposed on a substrate;

a uniform cross-section gate layer disposed on said insulative layer;

thin first spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said gate layer;

thin second spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said thin first spacers;

thin third spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said thin second spacers;

thick fourth spacers disposed adjacent to opposite sides of said thin third spacers; and

a conductive layer disposed on said gate layer, wherein at least part of the conductive layer is wider than said gate layer.

40. (New) The gate electrode of claim 31, wherein the conductive layer has a non-uniform cross-section defined by a narrower base section which is in contact with the gate layer, and a wider top section.

41. (New) The gate electrode of claim 40, wherein the thin first spacers and the thin second spacers are deformed to accommodate the wider top section of the conductive layer.

42. (New) The gate electrode of claim 40, wherein the part of the conductive layer that is wider than the gate layer rests on at least the first thin spacer.

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~~43.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 31 wherein said insulative layer comprises an oxide.

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~~44.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 43 wherein said gate layer comprises a polysilicon.

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~~45.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 44 wherein said conductive layer comprises a polycide.

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~~46.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 45 wherein said thin first spacers comprise an oxide.

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~~47.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 46 wherein said thin second spacers comprise a nitride.

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~~48.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 47 wherein said thin third spacers comprise an oxide.

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~~49.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 48 wherein said thick fourth spacers comprise a nitride.

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~~50.~~ (New) The gate electrode of claim 49 wherein said polycide comprises titanium salicide ($TiSi_2$).